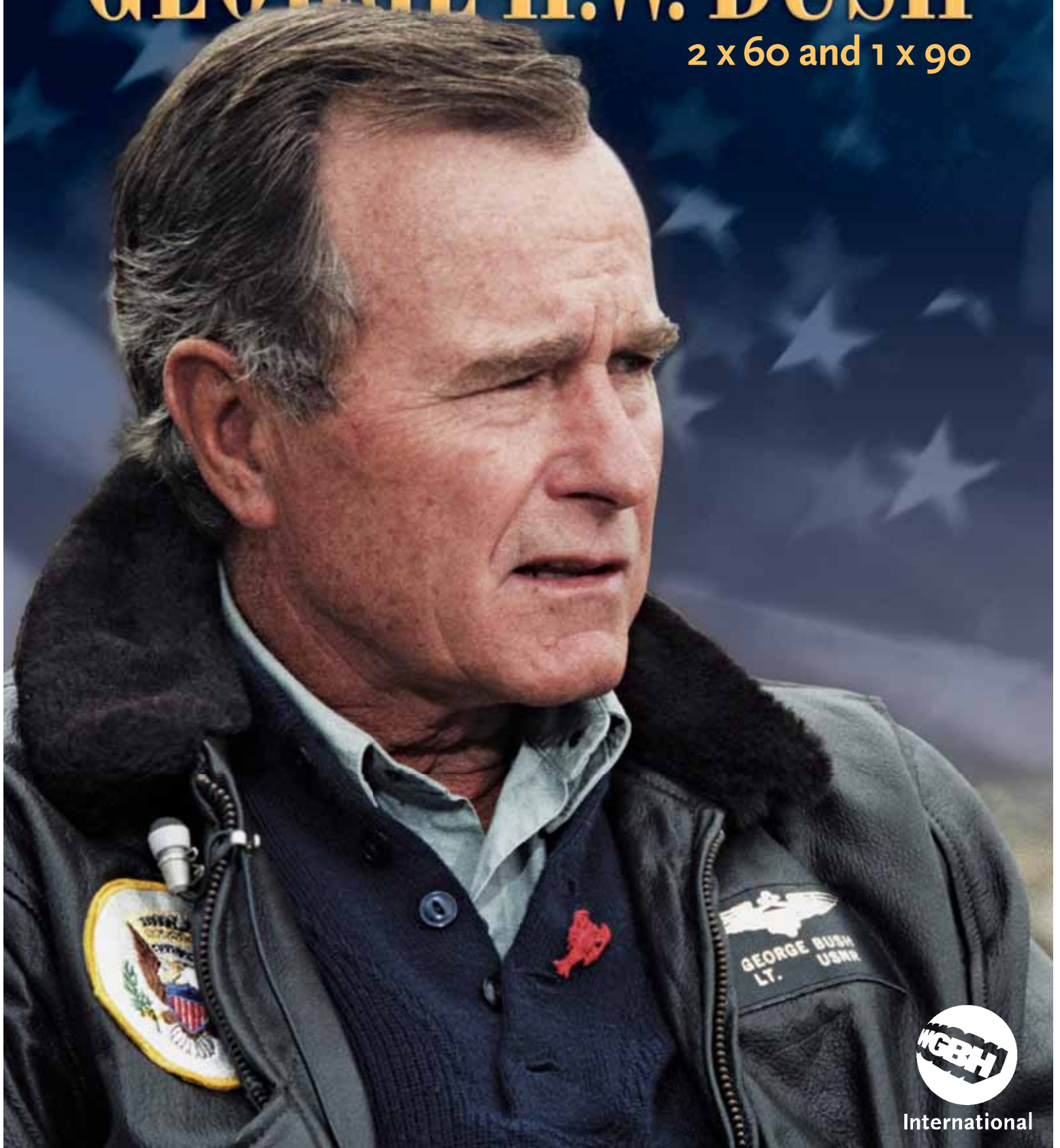


GEORGE H.W. BUSH

2 x 60 and 1 x 90



International

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When George H.W. Bush left the Oval Office in 1992, rejected after one tumultuous presidential term, his 30-year career in public service came to an abrupt and unexpected end. Despite soaring approval ratings following military victory in the Persian Gulf, his years as president after the war were marked by almost unrelieved decline. A sluggish economy and an earlier decision to raise taxes, despite an explicit campaign oath, led to his defeat.

AMERICAN EXPERIENCE premieres the first in-depth assessment of the 41st president of the United States, drawing upon new scholarship and unparalleled access to figures in Bush's private and public life. *George H.W. Bush* reveals Bush as a pivotal player during a critical moment in American and world history and in a powerful political dynasty. Bush's personal letters and interviews with his closest advisors and prominent critics inform the film, which features interviews with First Lady Barbara Bush, Condoleezza Rice, Colin Powell, Mikhail Gorbachev and others.

The film tells the story of a man born to both economic and political privilege and tutored in modesty, a man who enlisted in the Navy on his 18th birthday and became a hero in World War II. It recounts Bush's post-war time at Yale University, where he excelled in athletics, and his marriage to Barbara Pierce. It tells of his adventurous days as a Texas oil wildcatter, the tragic loss of a daughter to leukemia and his entry into Republican politics at a time of roiling change.

Bush's upward path through the changing landscape of Texas and national politics took him to the US House of Representatives, the UN, the Republican National Committee, the CIA—as an ambassador to China, giving him one of the most distinguished résumés in government—and a front-row seat for the intrigue of Watergate and the management of the Cold War. Passed over for the vice-presidency by Gerald Ford, Bush would go on to serve Ronald Reagan in that role for two terms, during the heyday of the conservative ascendancy, before eventually assuming the presidency in 1988.

President Reagan may have initiated the end of the Cold War, but it was Bush who brought it to a close without a shot being fired, and it was Bush who shepherded the reunification of East and West Germany and the integration of Germany into NATO. Despite his Cold War accomplishment, it was victory in the first Gulf War that sent George Bush's approval rating to 89 percent—at the time, the highest ever recorded.

Ultimately, Bush had amassed all the political capital a president could have, but as the economy continued to sink and the unemployment rate soared, he was accused of losing touch with the American people and with his party. He ran a weak re-election campaign in 1992, paving the way for Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton to become the next president.

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AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

CREDITS

AMERICAN EXPERIENCE Executive Producer: Mark Samels

Series producer: Sharon Grimberg

Producer: Austin Hoyt

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